

Message Text

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P 092004Z AUG 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EINV

SUBJECT: OPIC PROGRAMS IN SINGAPORE

REF: SINGAPORE 3057 AND PREVIOUS

1. AT ITS AUGUST 2 MEETING, THE OPIC BOARD GAVE ONLY TENTATIVE APPROVAL TO NEW GUIDELINES TO RESTRICT OPIC COVERAGE IN ADVANCED LDCS, AND IT MADE NO DECISIONS WITH RESPECT TO PARTICULAR COUNTRIES. WHILE THERE IS A NEED TO RESPOND TO THE GOS QUICKLY, IT WOULD BE BEST NOT TO GO INTO ANY DETAIL ABOUT THE CONTENT OF THE GUIDELINES, SINCE THEY ARE NOT NECESSARILY FINAL, OR TO TRY TO PREDICT WHEN A DECISION MIGHT BE MADE REGARDING SINGAPORE. WE SUGGEST AN ORAL RESPONSE ALONG THE LINES OF PARAGRAPHS TWO THROUGH FIVE, THE SUBSTANCE OF WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN CONVEYED TO AMBASSADOR COOMARASWAMY IN AN AUGUST 2
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MEETING WITH UNDER SECRETARY COOPER AND TO DCM CHANDRA IN AN AUGUST 4 MEETING IN THE BUREAU.

2. THE REPORT THAT REACHED THE GOS OF A CHANGE IN OPIC POLICY WAS PREMATURE AND NOT FULLY ACCURATE. THE OPIC BOARD DISCUSSED NEW POLICY GUIDELINES ON AUGUST 2, BUT IT DID NOT ARRIVE AT A FINAL DECISION. LIKEWISE, NO

DECISION WAS MADE REGARDING THE PROGRAMS IN ANY COUNTRY.

3. THE AIM OF THE NEW GUIDELINES UNDER CONSIDERATION IS TO SHIFT OPIC'S EMPHASIS FURTHER IN FAVOR OF COUNTRIES THAT NEED ASSISTANCE MOST, BUT THIS DOES NOT IMPLY AN ABRUPT AND TOTAL CUT-OFF OF ACTIVITIES IN THE MORE ADVANCED COUNTRIES WHERE OPIC HAS PROGRAMS. WE DO NOT INTEND TO ABROGATE BILATERAL OPIC AGREEMENTS WITH THE LATTER COUNTRIES. NEITHER DOES THE U.S. WISH TO DISCOURAGE AMERICAN INVESTMENT.

4. IN GENERAL TERMS; HOWEVER, THE U.S. POLICY THAT OPIC IS SEEKING TO IMPLEMENT CALLS FOR GRADUATION TO A STATUS OF REDUCED EMPHASIS FOR COUNTRIES WITH HEALTHY INVESTMENT CLIMATES, LIKE SINGAPORE, WHICH ARE ABLE TO ATTRACT PRIVATE INVESTMENT ON THEIR OWN. ANY SUCH CHANGE IN OPIC POLICY TOWARD SINGAPORE WILL BE DISCUSSED IN ADVANCE WITH THE GOS.

5. AT THE U.S.-ASEAN ECONOMIC CONSULTATIONS, WE PLAN TO DISCUSS WAYS, IN ADDITION TO OPIC, FOR THE U.S. TO COOPERATE WITH ASEAN COUNTRIES IN THEIR EFFORTS TO ATTRACT INVESTORS.

6. FYI: WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE ACTION ON OPIC PROGRAMS FOR SINGAPORE UNTIL AFTER THE U.S.-ASEAN CONSULTATIONS
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AND PRIME MINISTER LEE'S TRIP TO THE U.S. IN THE FALL.
CHRISTOPHER

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